

REMARKS

The applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgement of the claim for priority under section 119 and the notice that all of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

The applicants acknowledge and appreciate receiving an initialed copy of the forms PTO-1449 that were filed on 6 October 2003 and 3 July 2001.

Claims 2, 4, 5, 7, and 8 are pending. Claims 1, 3 and 6 have been canceled. Claim 5 has been allowed. The applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

The disclosure was objected to for two informalities. Both of the informalities have been corrected as suggested by the examiner in paragraphs 1a and 1b of the office action.

In paragraph 2 of the office action, the claims were objected to for informalities. Claims 1 and 3 have been canceled. However, in rewriting claim 4 in independent form, the error noted in paragraph 2b was corrected. Also, the improper dependencies of claims 7 and 8 have been corrected by writing claim 8 in independent form including the limitations of claim 6. Claim 7 now depends on claim 8.

Claims 4 and 8 were objected to as being dependent on rejected claims but were said to be allowable if rewritten in independent form. Claims 4 and 8 have been written in independent form including all the limitations of their base claims, with the understanding that claim 8 should have depended on claim 6 instead of claim 5 in the original application (See paragraph 2c of the office action). Therefore, claims 4 and 8 are considered to be in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 3, and 6 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Sugimoto et al. Claims 1, 3 and 6 have been canceled and thus will not be discussed.

Claims 2 and 7 were rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Sugimoto et al. The applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn for the following reasons.


Claim 2 now depends on claim 4, which was said to contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, claim 2 is considered to be in condition for allowance.

Claim 7 now depends on claim 8, which was said to contain allowable subject matter. Therefore, claim 7 is considered to be in condition for allowance.

In view of the foregoing, the applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. A timely notice to that effect is respectfully requested. If questions relating to patentability remain, the examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone.

Please charge any unforeseen fees that may be due to Deposit Account No. 50-1147.

Respectfully submitted,



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